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Two recent books on algae.

A VERY readable text on British fresh-water algae by G. S. WEST⁶ has appeared and will be welcomed as the only work of its kind in English that is up to date. The descriptive portions of the book are clear and the figures excellent. The accounts of the desmids, diatoms, and unicellular green algae deserve special mention. The general arrangement of the groups is quite simple and consistent from the author's point of view, but few specialists would be likely to agree with him, so varied are the classifications of the algae. WEST's arrangement is in the main conservative, and the synopses and keys are so clear that the reader cannot be confused. There is a preliminary account of methods of reproduction, sexual organs, polymorphism, and phylogeny. These topics might well have been expanded, as in their condensed form a reader with little knowledge of morphology is scarcely likely to grasp the underlying homologies and evolutionary principles illustrated in the algae.

Much more pretentious is a large volume of OLTMANNS⁷ which is announced as the special part and is to be followed shortly by a second that will treat of general problems. OLTMANNS covers the entire group of the algae, fresh water and marine, excepting the Cyanophyceae, and aims to collect all important literature of recent years. His classification is elaborate, and the arrangement of the great groups is quite different from that in *Die natürlichen Pflanzenfamilien*. However, the families are easily understood, and it is around them that the descriptive matter is collected in convenient form. Reproductive processes are discussed in great detail, especially for the Phaeophyceae and Rhodophyceae, where the advance in our knowledge has been greatest in recent years. The account of the Rhodophyceae, following his interpretation of the cystocarp as involving a sporophytic generation associated with the gametophyte, is an especially valuable contribution, bringing order into what has been one of the most chaotic subjects in botany. The work is very full of figures, some 470, excellently reproduced, many of them covering the greater part of the page. This first volume is sure to find a hearty reception and the second one will be awaited with keen interest.—B. M. DAVIS.

Index Bryologicus.

THE *Index Bryologicus* of Général PARIS⁸ was completed in 1894 and a supplement was published in 1900. It was welcome as a real boon to bryologists and the immense toil of its author was gratefully appreciated. Now it has been

⁶ WEST, G. S., A treatise on the British freshwater algae. 8vo. pp. 372. *figs.* 166. Cambridge University Press. 1904. 10s. 6d.

⁷ OLTMANNS, F., Morphologie und Biologie der Algen. Vol. I. 8vo. pp. 733. *figs.* 467. Jena: Gustav Fischer. 1904. *M* 20.

⁸ PARIS, E. G., Index Bryologicus sive enumeratio muscorum ad diem ultimam anni 1900 cognitorum, adjunctis synonymia distributioneque geographica locupletissimis. fasc. II. 8vo. pp. 65-128. Paris: Librairie Scientifique A. Hermann. 1903 2.50 *fr.*

determined to recast the work and to supply certain deficiencies, especially in dates of publication and in Scandinavian literature, bringing the work down to the beginning of the twentieth century as a point of departure for future investigations.

The original was unfortunate in usually omitting the dates of publication of species; the prospectus announces that in the second edition this lack will be supplied. Yet the second fascicle (which alone has just reached us) shows many failures to carry out this laudable intention. *Nomina nuda* (admitted in the first edition in hope of proper publication!) will be rigorously excluded, it is said, but the *Index* will include besides described species and those issued in numbered exsiccati, species "existant dans les grands herbiers publiques (Kew, British Museum, Paris, etc.) où on peut les consulter." The latter have no place in such a work and should be as rigorously excluded as other *nomina nuda*.

The author of so important a bibliographical work should have adopted a consistent system of citation and adhered to it rigidly. Much space might have been saved and greater clearness attained by attention to such details. References "*loc. et op. cit.*" are maddening because they compel the users to hunt back for the last citation often some lines back and not prominent enough to catch the eye readily. Even with its faults the revision of this indispensable *Index* will be greatly appreciated. We trust the publisher will take due pains to make its dress accurate and worthy of this valuable work. It is to be issued in monthly fascicles of which about 25 will be needed.—C. R. B.

Wiesner and his school.

THE PERSONALITY of a great investigator is very properly recognized upon festal days by his associates and pupils. Hofrat Professor Dr. WIESNER founded in 1873 the institute for plant physiology in University of Vienna, and upon the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of his professorship his many pupils have united in congratulations, and a *Festschrift*⁹ has been prepared by three of them, which takes the form of a contribution to the history of botany. After a congratulatory introduction by Dr. HANS MOLISCH it consists of two parts. In the first is a bibliography of WIESNER's writings, which number 213 titles extending over fifty years (1854-1903), and a running summary of his contributions to various subjects, classified so as to facilitate ready reference. As a second part there is a bibliography of 157 titles and a similar résumé of the work by his pupils which has issued from this institute. The first part was prepared by Dr. LUDWIG LINSBAUER of the Imperial Gymnasium and Dr. KARL LINSBAUER of the Institute (Professor Wiesner's assistant), and the second by Count LEOPOLD VON PORTHEIM, of the Biologische Versuchsanstalt recently established in the Prater.

⁹ LINSBAUER, K., LINSBAUER, L., and PORTHEIM, LEOPOLD R. VON, Wiesner und seine Schule; ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Botanik. Festschrift anlässlich des dreissigjährigen Bestandes des pflanzenphysiologischen Institutes der Wiener Universität. Mit einem Vorwort von Prof. Dr. HANS MOLISCH. 8vo. pp. xviii + 260. Wien: Alfred Hölder. 1903.